2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

CHAPTER VI

THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

"Before the tremendous shock of present day civilization, with all its harassing worries, vexatious rules, unbending laws, burdensome taxes, and crowds of immigrants, came upon us," say the Ainu, "our fathers had an easy time of it, without care and anxiety, and lived in quiet contentment and general happiness. But now all is change and the struggle for existence is wiping us out!" Poor fellows, they feel it sadly, notwithstanding all the protection and sympathy they are now getting.

According to ancient tradition, the Ainu people never had a monarchy. The elders of the race divided the government among the inhabitants of the separate villages, thus making each village community a small semi-independent state. And it seems to have worked well. The elders of each village assembled, I was told, and chose a chief and two sub-chiefs to manage the general affairs of the people, the women also being in attendance when such were being chosen. The principal chief, or, in the case of his absence, one of the sub-chiefs, was present at funerals to assist in burying the dead, or at marriages to signify his consent and cheer the young couple with his good wishes, or to assist in dividing up the meat or fish brought in by the hunters and fishermen.

The chiefs, together with the people, including the women, made the laws and sat in judgment upon the law-breakers. There were no law codes or clearly defined prescriptive rights, for the Ainu had no script.

[p. 35]

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924) 1927
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304 first touches, then the lower lip, and so on alternately till the tattoo reaches almost from ear to ear.

304 585 But we ask what is the real significance of the custom? Briefly I take it to be the wedding ring, but it is worn round the mouth instead of on the finger! I am quite convinced that it means taboo, though the Ainu seem to have lost that idea now, while in practice it is really so. I have on several occasions been called upon to arrange marriages for the people, and whenever things have gone on satisfactorily, I have noticed that the bride goes and has her tattoo finished round her mouth, and this is never completed till one has been betrothed or married. When the tattoo has been finished, all know that she is a married woman. She is set apart. Her fingers and arms are then done. So henceforth her mouth must speak only for her husband, and her tattooed hands and arms must work now for him and her offspring. But I must say that this custom is not always safe, for I have seen many with very swollen and sore lips after the tattooing has been done.

888 304 I was travelling a long time ago through the forest when far away in the interior I came across a tiny hut, standing quite by itself on the bank of a small stream. It was, as I thought it would be, a lodge set up there for an old person to die in. On going to look, I saw a very aged woman sitting by the hearth, stripping fibre from elm bark, with which to make cloth. She was quite blind but could do this very nicely. It was an old custom to place the very old people in little huts and feed them there till they died, on which event the place would be burnt down. The custom is dead now [178] and will not be revived, I hope. I thought it was a very cruel thing to do, but they did not seem to think so at all and quite expected it to happen to them if they lived too long. I entered the hut and sat down opposite her, as I wanted all the information I could get about olden times, which one could not hope to

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
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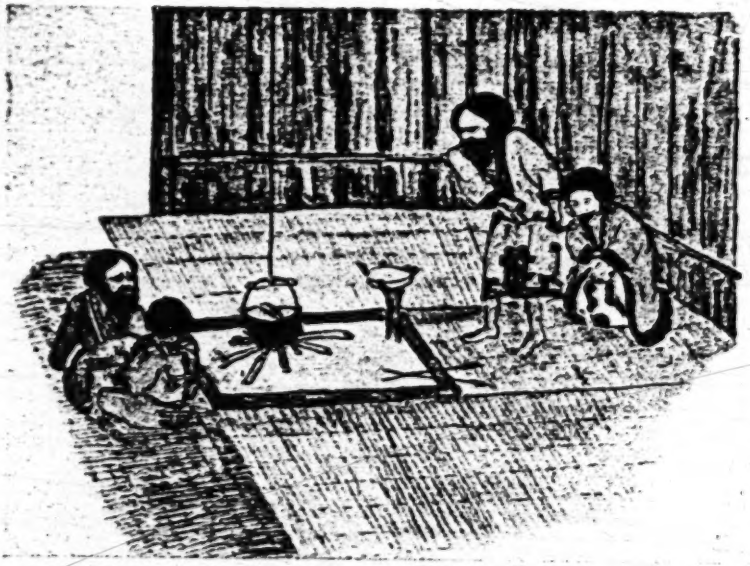

A DAUGHTER BEING GIVEN IN MARRIAGE (Old Japanese Drawing)

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BETROTHED Drawn by T. Katahira, an Ainu

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
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CHAPTER XXV

ON MARRIAGE

Although among the Ainu in olden times little children were sometimes betrothed to one another by their parents, the young men and women, as a rule, did their own courting freely, the marriage arrangements alone being left to the fathers and mothers of the ones affianced, and at all times both the young man and his choice had a final say in the matter. It was also thought as proper for a girl to propose to a young man as for a young man to "pop the question" himself. It was a continuous "Leap Year" with them. If the young man made the first proposal, he asked his father and mother to call upon the parents of his choice and try to arrange the marriage, but if it was the young woman who did the wooing, she would get her own father or mother to call upon the parents of her loved one. If all went well, the marriage took place, but, if the elders would not agree, the young people have been known to take the law into their own hands and walk off.

After a father had duly called on a friend and asked the hand of a daughter for his son in marriage, the following little ceremony took place between them, if all had gone well. The father of the bridegroom took a small sword which he placed in the hands of the bride's father, and said, "This sword is a pledge of betrothal; take it and worship. Do thou pray to the Goddess of Fire." Then, having received the sword, the bride's father would worship the Fire Goddess, offer libations of *saké* and say, "We have here and now

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924) 1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

585 settled to marry our son and daughter; therefore, O thou Goddess of Fire, hear thou and be witness thereto. Keep this couple from sickness and harm; watch over them till they become old." The bridegroom's father then received the sword back, worshipped and drank libations in like manner. This done, the old people, having procured a good supply of *saké*, made a feast which they partook of with their friends and relations. This drink was called *suechiu saké*, i.e. matrimonial *saké*. The bride poured some into a cup and gave it to her *fiancé*, and he, after drinking a little, returned the cup to her to finish. The feast itself was called *suechiu marapto*, i.e. matrimonial feast. With this, the couple were man and wife. If they were to live with their [591] parents, well and good; if not, they would build themselves a small hut to dwell in, one which they might enlarge at any time they thought necessary.

583 591 If the young woman herself or her parents were the prime movers in the affair, the bridegroom was removed from his own family and took up his abode either in or close to the hut of his father-in-law; he was, in fact, adopted. But if the bridegroom did the wooing or his parents were the prime movers, the bride was adopted into his family. Or, if a woman of one village chose a man of another for her husband, he went to live with her, and if the man chose a woman who lived some distance away, she went to live with him. Persons who married in their own villages were called *sirkusk*, blood relations, or brethren, but those who removed from their homes to be married into some distant family were called *siritak*, relations brought in, or distant relations.

582 585 The people considered their daughters to be marriageable at about sixteen or seventeen years of age. The men married when about nineteen or twenty. The youngest marriage I have yet seen among them took place when the bride's age was really as little as fifteen. At this feast there was nothing but a supply

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
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of *sake*. The bride's mother officiated. A few heirlooms were given the bridegroom and a few trinkets and beads to the bride. They were greatly delighted because I gave the bride a yen (about two shillings) as a wedding gift.

Owing to certain superstitions which have been mentioned in another place, the wife never took the husband's name, but retained her old one. When not called by her simple maiden name, she was generally called So-and-So's wife, so long as he was living, or So-and-So's mother, should she have a child. The general social position of the woman before her marriage was regarded as being equal to that of the man, but after that event she became subservient to her husband in all things excepting matters appertaining to the rule of the house. Of late years, however, everything has greatly changed and many matters are conducted more in accordance with Japanese customs.

Soon after marriage the bridegroom used to make a knife sheath, a spoon, a shuttle and a weaving loom, which he presented to his spouse. This was called *mat-eikara*, i.e. "making my wife." The bride then made a girdle, a pair of leggings, a necklace and a head-dress, which she presented to her husband. This was called *koku-eikara*, i.e. "making my husband." This ceremony appears to have been a kind of second pledging of the marriage vows, showing that they were satisfied with each other, and gave great satisfaction to both the parties concerned. A piece of lore given me on this was as follows:

"When a couple are newly married, the first thing to be done is for the bridegroom to give his bride a knife and sheath. In return for this the bride should give her husband a new cap. This is a very good custom and should be always carefully observed. So say the Ancient Ones."

It seems to have been an ancient custom sometimes to betroth children. But in such cases the persons so

3: Hitchcock N-5 (1888) 1891 AB6 Ainu AB6

grave and regarded the foreigners with great reverence. They then raised their hands and placed them on top of their heads and brought their hands down over their faces and beards and uttered a whining noise, ending with a sharp cry like the bark of a dog. 576

I have never seen this ceremony carried out in full, as described, but I doubt not the description is correct, for I have observed both the holding of the hands together and the stroking of the beard. Another form of the ceremony (Pl. CVII) represents the meeting of brother and sister, also from Mr. Greey. 576 583

The man held the woman's hand for a few seconds, then suddenly releasing his hold, grasped her by both ears and uttered the Aino cry. Then they stroked one another down the face and shoulders.

This form did not come under my observation, nor did I witness any such performances as the same author describes in the meeting of father and son.

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

The best account of the marriage customs is that given by Dr. Scheube, from which the following particulars are abstracted: the Ainos marry early, the men at about the age of 18, the women at 16; polygamy is permitted, but not much practiced; morality between the unmarried is not very strictly enforced, but children born through such relations are no bar to future marriage. 582 [585] [836]

The marriage customs resemble those of the Japanese. The parents usually select wives or husbands for their children. A young man rarely courts his wife directly, but through a go-between. As soon as the matter is satisfactorily arranged by the latter, the young man sends a portion of saké to the parents of his intended bride. After some time the latter sends a gift of saké and an *inao*, or God-stick, to the bridegroom. This is a sign that the marriage is to take place on the next day. In the evening of that day the neighbors assemble at the house of the bridegroom's parents. The bride comes in company with her parents and the intermediary. They depart about midnight to re-assemble the next morning, and the feasting goes on for 2 or 3 days, according to the circumstances of the young couple, who from henceforth live in the house of the man's parents. 584 585 [591]

Not many children are born; usually 3 or 4, and more boys than girls. The children are suckled until 4 or 5 years of age. 163 853

Divorces are not common. A man can only send his wife back to her parents by obtaining their consent. 586

BURIAL CUSTOMS.

Burial usually takes place on the day of death or on the following day. The friends and relatives assemble, bringing with them food and saké, which are placed before the body and, after the burial, shared by all in common. The corpse is clothed and placed in a wooden coffin, 764

4: Landor T-5 (ca. 1890) 1893 AB6 Ainu AB6

CHAPTER XXIX.

Marital Relations, and Causes that Limit Population.

THE laws of marriage in the Ainu country are not very stringent; in fact, there are no laws. If a young man takes a fancy to a pretty hairy maid, and the maid reciprocates his affections, all they have to do is to go and live together, and there is no Mrs. Grundy to be scandalised at the want of closer forms and ceremonies. There is no function to celebrate the occasion; there are no wedding presents, no bridesmaids, no officiating clergyman, and no old slipper flung after the happy pair as soon as the knot is tied. The bridegroom either goes to live in his bride's hut, or, if he does not care for his mother-in-law, he will bring his lady-love to his own father's hut. Usually, however, the two, especially if their respective families are large, prefer to build a hut of their own. The honeymoon is spent in house-building, and while the bride carries the loads of timber and long reeds, the bridegroom accomplishes the more difficult task of putting them together as well as he can for future shelter. All goes well with the happy couple until the roof has to be lifted up bodily and perched on the forked poles, during which process "family rows" generally begin. But they do not last long, and when the house is finished, though not decorated, home peace reigns within, and the bridegroom, as we have already seen, proceeds to ornament his chief treasure—his wife—with tattoos on her arms. This idyllic state of things is not specially permanent, for soon after this first marriage the Ainu feels that he would like another wife, and, without thinking twice about it, he

4: Landor T-5 (ca. 1890)1893 AB6 Ainu AB6

marries again. Though savage and barbarian, the Ainu is shrewd enough not to take his second wife to live with his first, for he knows what the result would be, human nature being the same in Yezo as it is in London, and jealousy as strong among the tattooed women of the hairy people as among the fair-skinned daughters of the West. All women are bad enough when out of temper, but the Ainu women are pre-eminent in this respect. Our shock-haired bigamist calls his first wife *poro-machi*—"great wife," and he calls the other *pon-machi*—"small wife;" and as long as the two females do not live under the same roof they are all happy with the arrangement. If, indeed, he chooses to have more than these two wives he thinks small blame to himself. There is no bar of any kind in his code to his having a third "half;" but this seldom happens now, for the women are not in such over abundance in the Ainu country as to allow each man to indulge in a "triple alliance." The Ainu are therefore polygamists when they can find the third woman, and almost always bigamists when this is possible. The wife does not take her husband's name, for no Ainu has a family surname; and each man or woman is called after some peculiarity which he or she possesses, or after some event or accident which has befallen them. For instance, *Una-charo*, a man's name, means "Sprinkled-ashes," and *Yei-Ainu*, "Dangerous Ainu," &c.; and *Korunke*, a woman's name, means "Ice-eater;" *Reoback*, "Who burst three times," and so on, each person having a different name, which is nothing more than a nick-name. When the girl gets married she does not drop this nick-name, neither, as has been said, does she take her husband's name, though sometimes she is called So-and-So's wife. Supposing that Miss Burst-three-times were to marry Mr. Sprinkled-ashes, she would be Mr. Sprinkled-ashes' wife, and would still be called by her maiden name, Burst-three-times.

It is impossible to quote exact statistics of the Ainu population, and whether the women outnumber the men, but from my own observation I should think that females are in excess of the males in some districts, and about even in others.

The man, naturally, is the lord and master of the household, and the wife is like a kind of inferior being or a slave, whose duty it is to obey her male companion. She has to yield in

7:Munro & Seligman D. E-4. 5 (ca. 1900-1942) 1963
AB6 Ainu AB6

lated, and who wanted to marry, to discuss the matter with elders, and the girl would be allowed to change her *kut*. Previously a fine used to be imposed and the parents of the couple would be obliged to placate Kamui Fuchi and beg her permission to alter the *kut*.

A few cases of a man marrying two sisters were recorded in a neighbouring village, and one of a man who divorced his first wife and afterwards married her sister. Misfortune followed, including dumb offspring and children who died young. The people of Nibutani were shocked, and would attribute any misfortune to such behaviour.

Marriage between half-brothers and sisters, the children of different mothers, though not transgressing *kut* exogamy, was looked upon with disgust. Munro was told of one such case, of which the offspring were deaf and dumb with the exception of one child who had a hare-lip. Such a departure from customary behaviour was considered offensive to the ancestors, and their displeasure might affect the whole community, as well as the evil-doers.

In a note published in *Man*, No. 33: 1938, Munro records a poem recited at a wedding and gives some details of the wedding ceremony. Wedding gifts are exchanged but there is no definite payment of bride wealth. The bridegroom usually sends the materials for the sacred beer to be made at the bride's house for the wedding feast. Guests are assembled and Kamui Fuchi is invoked. As a salutation, the bride's father holds a cup of the sacred beer in his left hand and, stroking it gently to and fro, makes a speech in poetic form. He places a libation wand on the cup and in the usual ceremonial manner passes it to the bridegroom who drinks half and hands the remainder to the bride. As she receives it, she raises it to the level of her forehead, swings it gently three times from right to left, and then drinks. As she drinks, she performs the female ritual salutation, drawing the forefinger of the right hand up the left arm from the fingers to her upper lip, and says '*hap*', which indicates thankfulness. Should she refuse to drink there would be no marriage. Though the ceremony is held in the house of the bride's father, the bride goes to live in her husband's house in his father's village, but she may return for the birth of her first child.

With regard to inheritance, all essentially female property (*huchi-horpe*) is inherited by daughters from their mother. Mr Sugiura

/762/

General Treatment of Women. —

844 [142] Among the rest of the inhabitants of Sakhalin Island births are handled quite differently. These people are the hairy Ainu who in appearance much resemble the Russian peasants. They do not have many of the discomforts that burden the women in childbirth and of which we will say more below. This fact cannot be ascribed to their longer and closer contact with the more civilized Japanese, for other crude customs, which have been preserved to an equal extent among the Ainu and the Gilyak, 844 562 have not changed correspondingly. The cause, rather, of the greater care which is accorded here to the woman in childbed lies in the considerably better social standing of the Ainu woman. She is never sold, and after marriage she does not become a [585] member of a foreign tribe. Kinship on the maternal side is con- [602] sidered closer than that on the paternal side. Altogether there are still clear traces of an earlier /763/ matriarchy in the Ainu [182] family. By now it is pretty well extinct but pronounced enough yet to make the life of an Ainu woman far better in many cases than that of women belonging to other tribes.

591 844 The Ainu girl after her marriage is in no hurry to move over into her husband's house and often spends a few years in the parental house. Therefore her first confinement takes place, as a rule, among her closest relatives. I knew a woman in her middle age who had traveled back home to await her confinement in her parents' house.

From that alone it is obvious that the Ainu offer the woman 843 562 in childbirth more comforts than the Gilyak or Orok (1). In

1. The third tribe living on Sakhalin. Its customs are more similar to those of the Gilyak than those of the Ainu.

fact, one notices a definite sense of sympathy and of a certain awe towards the woman who is shortly to become a mother.

[pp. 756-762 on the Gilyak have not been translated – Analyst]